

# LOCAL SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD'S FILM 'THE ASTRONOMER' TO BE FEATURED SATURDAY

By BOOMERANG STAFF

London Homer-Wambeam’s passion for making movies started a few years ago when he was hanging out with friends in the Lincoln Community Center.

“We decided we should make a horror movie there, so we were running around with the camera,” he said. “I decided the next time, I will have a script written. So, it’s sort of taken off from that. And since then, I’ve learned a lot about making movies.”

Homer-Wambeam has written, directed and produced six films, including two documentaries: one about the Hindenburg disaster, and one on Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity, for which he won “Best Student Documentary” at the New York International Independent Film Festival in 2010. Last year, the 16 year old was a finalist at National History Day for his documentary on the Hindenburg disaster and won the best in state award, according to information on his Web site, [www.petrifyingproductions.weebly.com](http://www.petrifyingproductions.weebly.com).

Homer-Wambeam’s most recent film, “The Astronomer,” will be screened for free at 3 p.m. Saturday at the Wyo Theatre. The film is a remake of “A Trip to the Moon,” a 1902 movie by a French filmmaker George Melies.

“I wanted to remake it in full color, with the same sort of attitude and basic story line that he had, but with more character development,” Homer-Wambeam said. “I always liked the look of it. It’s very absurd in certain ways, there are plants on the moon, it (the moon) has a face but it’s very sort of fanciful even though it’s science fiction. I really like the look



A scene from the film “The Astronomer.” Courtesy photo

of it. And I just like the idea of taking this movie that at the time (had) the best special effects you could do ... and make it into a more elaborate thing.”

To make this film, a crew of volunteers including Homer-Wambeam’s friends interested in acting or actors from the community, went to Vedauwoo for two days.

“I made my actors get up at 5 in the morning and we went to bed at like 11 p.m. the night before. It was really crazy,” he said. “I don’t make any money off of it, and any money I make from it, which so far I haven’t made any, goes back into production stuff. But I buy everything out of my own pocket.”

Homer-Wambeam said there are several directors that inspire him, including Fitz Lang, an Austrian-American filmmaker who directed “The Metropolis,” and Melies.

“Back then, the way they did it was

**What:** “The Astronomer” feature film  
**When:** Saturday at 3 p.m.  
**Where:** Wyo Theatre, 309 S. Fifth  
**Details:** The film is free and open to public. For more information about the film, go to [www.tinyurl.com/petrifyingproductions](http://www.tinyurl.com/petrifyingproductions).

more just like they were filming stage. He (Melies) did more interesting things because there’s almost a series of short skits on different sets but they never moved the camera back then,” Homer-Wambeam said. “In terms of cinematography, there is not a whole lot you can take from him. More in terms of the look and he had a lot of interesting ideas that he used in this film about science being absurd and, sort of, the quest for more information was sort of almost silly, just the way he presents it. So, I really try to take that on this in film.”

# Rebuffed by mainstream, Black turns humor inward

REDDING, Conn. (AP) — Down a quiet country road in rural Connecticut, in a home with a stone wall out front and glittery pinecones on the coffee table, lives Michael Ian Black.

It is, if anything, an unlikely outpost for one of comedy’s most free-flowing fonts, a prodigious, medium-shifting comic who came up as a member of the sketch comedy troupe The State, went on to make cult TV shows and movies, and has now transitioned into stand-up and book writing. More than 1.7 million follow his steady stream of jokes and observations on Twitter.

The peculiar normalcy of his residence isn’t lost on Black. Of his peaceful town, Redding, he said, “most of the crime here is committed by me.”

“Even last night, I was walking around this house, and just going, ‘This is my house?’” Black, gazing around on the interiors which house him, his wife Martha Hagen-Black, their two children, their dog and their cat, said.

It’s that sense of curious dissociation that kicks off Black’s new book, “You’re Not Doing It Right: Tales of Marriage, Death and Other Humiliations.” It’s a comedic memoir-ish tale that Gallery Books, a division of Simon & Schuster, will publish Tuesday.

He opens the book with

the self-examination of a midlife crisis, lamenting the mere image of the word “forty” (his age) as “like a shrub that died” while morosely scouring the Internet for photos of “Fat Kevin Federline” — a kind a stand-in for all of Black’s fears of failure, irrelevance and “terrible hair decisions.”

“I wonder if, like me, there are people who occasionally experience the curious, disembodied sensation of not recognizing their present life as their own,” Black wrote. “It is a feeling I can only describe as the opposite of deja vu.”

What follows is a kind of inspection of that life, principally his relationship with Hagen-Black and their experience raising two children. Though “You’re Not Doing It Right” has much comedy in it, its foremost trait is its honesty — a clear-eyed truth-telling about the hardships of marriage (including the admission that both he and Hagen-Black sometimes fantasize about divorce), the death of his father, and the frustrations of child-rearing (the music of Creed, of all things, sparks an emotional breakthrough on fatherhood).

But even uttering the label “memoir” — approximate but unavoidable — bothers Black.

“It’s like I’m lashing myself when I say it,” he said. “It implies a level



Michael Ian Black is seen. AP photo

of accomplishment that I certainly don’t feel. I haven’t really achieved anything other than landing on basic television. ... Tina Fey, she can write a memoir.”

Black doesn’t savor his choice, knowing it rings of bandwagon-hopping. Comedic memoirs have become en vogue in recent years, including those by Patton Oswalt, Sarah Silverman and Black’s fellow State alum and frequent collaborator Michael Showalter, who

released the postmodern “Mr. Funny Pants” last year.

It’s Black’s fourth book following two children’s books and the collection of humorous essays “My Custom Van” (sample essay: “What I Would Be Thinking If I Were Billy Joel Driving to a Holiday Party Where I Knew There Was Going to Be a Piano”). With “You’re Not Doing It Right,” Black wanted to pursue a more personal approach in tandem with his recent focus in stand-up.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## Laramie

**TODAY** The University of Wyoming Symphony will perform Brahms’s Requiem at 7:30 p.m. in the Fine Arts Concert Hall. For tickets, call 766-6666.

**TODAY-MARCH 17** The University of Wyoming presents the 37th Annual Juried UW Student Exhibition from 10 a.m.- 9 p.m. Mondays and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays.

**TODAY-APRIL 21** The University of Wyoming presents “Brian Dickerson: Constructed Paintings and Drawings” and “Woven Traditions: Native American Basketry of the Southwest” from 10 a.m.- 9 p.m. Mondays and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays.

**TODAY-MAY 5** The University of Wyoming presents “Edward Burtynsky: The Industrial Sublime” and “Photography from the 20th Century: the Art Museum Collection, Part I” from 10 a.m.- 9 p.m. Mondays and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays.

**FRIDAY** A cappella group Take 6 will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Arts and Sciences Auditorium. For ticket information, call 766-5139.

**FRIDAY-SATURDAY** Performances of “The Vagina Monologues” will begin at 7 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Education Auditorium. For ticket information, call (307) 321-8683.

**SATURDAY** The 2012 Conservation Expo goes from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Albany County Faigrounds Activity Building. The event is free and features a variety of conservation-minded businesses and non-profits.

**SATURDAY** The world premier of “The Astronomer,” a film made by 16 year-old London Homer-Wambeam at 3 p.m. in the Wyo Theater. Tickets are free and available at the door.

**MONDAY** “The Healing Fields: The Legacy of War and the Search for Miss Landmine,” a presentation by journalist and writer Mark Jenkins, begins at 5 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Classroom Building Room 310.

**TUESDAY** A free screening of the documentary, “Miss Representation” begins at 7 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Classroom Building Room 142. The documentary, by Jennifer Siebel Newsom, explores how the media’s misrepresentations of women have led to the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence.

**WEDNESDAY** Benyaro will perform at 8 p.m. in Coal Creek Coffee Co.’s downtown location.

**MARCH 3** Afroman will perform at 7 p.m. in the Cowboy Bar, 303 S. Third. Tickets can be purchased in advance at Mellow Yellow or at the door.

**MARCH 5** A screening of “Manufactured Landscapes,” a 2006 film exploring the work of photographer Edward Burtynsky, begins at 7 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Art Museum.

**MARCH 7** Youtube comedy duo Barats and Bereta will perform at 8 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Union Ballroom.

**MARCH 7** Author John D’Agata will give a reading from “The Lifespan of a Fact” at 7 p.m. in Second Story Books, 105 Ivinson. The event is free and open to the public.

**MARCH 19** The Ataris and Redbush will perform at 8 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Education Auditorium.

**MARCH 23** Blasted Canyons, Stat Dad and Sons of Mars will perform at 9 p.m. in the Cowboy Bar, 303 S. Third.

**APRIL 7** The Stereofidelics will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the Laramie Plains Civic Center.

**APRIL 13** Screen Door Porch will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the Laramie Plains Civic Center.

## Centennial and the region

**SATURDAY** Jay Shogren and the Shanghai’d will perform for the “UN RUN” ski day from 3-8 p.m.

**THURSDAY** Cajun blues-rock musicians the Avey Brothers will perform at 8 p.m. in the Trading Post Dinner House and Saloon.

# ‘Stars of Tomorrow’ competition deadline Friday

The Laramie Kiwanis Club invites students from Albany County to participate in the annual “Stars of Tomorrow“ competition. The contest focuses on amateur talent in the area and is a open to children from first grade through seniors in high school.

Students may perform a solo act or in groups of no more than five people. For more than 50 years, the Laramie Kiwanis Club has sponsored this talent show as have Kiwanis clubs across the country. Participants have performed a variety of acts including vocal and instrumental music, baton twirling, dancing (tap, acrobatic and ballet), comedy and drama. Contestants are judged on the basis of talent and audience appeal.

First and second place winners in each division — elementary, junior high and high school — are eligible for the “Best in Show“ trophy.

There are no tryouts for the competition. Anyone interested in the Stars of Tomorrow event can get a form from school music teachers or by contacting Carmen Leonard at 760-4739. The deadline to enter is Friday and the competition is March 3.